



News Release

**US Army Corps
of Engineers**
Kansas City District

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Agencies team up to decrease drowning deaths on Missouri lakes

SMITHVILLE, Mo. - Members of the media will get an up-close look Thursday at a campaign sponsored by the Army Corps of Engineers and the Missouri State Water Patrol to decrease the number of drowning deaths on Missouri lakes this Memorial Day weekend.

Park rangers from the Clay County Parks Department, the Corps and the Missouri State Water Patrol will meet members of the media at noon at Smithville Lake's Paradise Pointe Marina to discuss the importance of personal flotation devices, sober boating and the safe operation of personal watercraft. The agencies will also detail their planned enforcement campaign for the holiday weekend.

"More than 125,000 boaters are expected to flock to Missouri lakes this Memorial Day weekend, and we want to ensure everyone's visit is enjoyable and safe," said Mitch Frazier, the Corps' public affairs officer. "The best way for everyone to enjoy this holiday season is to not drink and boat and to remember life jackets before heading out on the water."

Nationwide more than 700 people lost their lives while boating last year. Nine out of 10 of those were not wearing a life jacket, and half of all the accidents involved alcohol.

The increasing number of personal watercraft and inexperienced operators are also becoming a concern for waterborne law enforcement. More than 1.3 million personal watercraft are estimated to be in operation in the U.S.

For more information, contact Frazier at (816) 983-3486.

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EDITOR'S NOTE: Paradise Pointe Marina is located in Smithville Lake's Little Platte Park and can be reached by taking Highway 169 to 180th Street. Turn East on 180th. 180th become F Highway at the stop sign. Follow F Highway into park (nearly one mile from the stop sign). A gate attendant will direct media members to the marina.